



Inc.:

- Greg Kirby – President
- Dennis Moss – Business Development

Chairman Inman noted:

- Board had agreed to hear a presentation regarding privatization of Emergency Medical Services

President Kirby presented the following comments:

- Appreciate the opportunity to be here today
- Started the business about 23 years ago in South Carolina
- American TransMed is an Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) provider in North and South Carolina
- Currently employ close to 165 people
- Employ Paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians
- Operate 45-55 ambulances on a daily basis
- Transport anywhere from 125-135 patients per day
- Do a lot of inter-facility transports from small rural hospitals to the larger hospitals
- Provide service to Carolina Medical Center (has 31 hospitals located throughout North & South Carolina); Carolina Hospital System based in Florence, SC; and Community Health Services (hospitals located throughout North & South Carolina)
- We are a private entity
- Just wanted to give you a general idea of what we do
- Will be glad to answer any questions the Board may have

Chairman Inman opened the floor for discussion.

Chairman Inman commented:

- Confirmed with President Kirby that they currently provide the following services for Carrabus County:
  - Non-emergency services
  - Back up their 911 system
  - Pick up all deceased patients

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- What region does the 165 employees cover?

President Kirby responded:

- Operate within 24-25 counties within North & South Carolina
- Six offices strategically located throughout South Carolina
- Able to move units from area to area based on call volume

- Have a contract with FEMA – when there is a natural disaster in this area, we are the third system activated; we have been to other locations such as Texas, New York, etc.

Commissioner Jones commented:

- Concerned about the financial relief the county will have and the comparable cost to the citizens

President Kirby responded:

- My suggestion would be send out a Request for Proposal (RFP) in order to get credentials, the areas they will be covering, and costs
- Would probably submit a proposal for this area

Vice Chairman Booth commented:

- Questioned what is your basic price for the operation of a unit?

President Kirby responded:

- Operate a 24/48 hour shift
- One figure we always look at is somewhere around \$250,000 per unit within a community, that figure can always change
- You need to look at response time when you send out a RFP in order to determine if the provider can meet your needs

Vice Chairman Booth continued:

- Requested information about collections?

President Kirby responded:

- Do different things with different entities
- We are private entity – for profit
- Not going to come here to rob you
- Operate our own billing services with a collection rate of 85% to 90%
- Also do billing for other providers
- That type of information can be included in a RFP
- We can work out a model with the county
- We do community events because we want to give back to the community
- Could possibly reimburse the county part of the collections – could be as much as 50% depending on costs incurred by American TransMed
- Would work a model specific to Stokes County

Vice Chairman Booth continued:

- We have five units and two back ups
- Confirmed with President Kirby that an arrangement could possibly be made regarding the existing units – possible purchase/lease (fair market value)
- Confirmed with President Kirby that an arrangement could possibly be made regarding the facilities currently being used (possible lease)

County Manager Morris questioned if American TransMed had ever run a rural Emergency Medical Services (EMS)?

President Kirby responded:

- Have not run a rural EMS, only backup

County Manager Rick Morris confirmed with President Kirby that he could not guarantee that the County would not have to subsidize the operation of EMS if American TransMed was chosen to provide the services.

County Manager Morris noted that he had a survey that he would like for American TransMed to complete and return back to the County.

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Seem to know some about the County's current operation
- Confirmed with President Kirby that he had only reviewed the county's website and read a few articles in the paper
- Confirmed with President Kirby that American TransMed would like to have much more information before deciding whether to submit a RFP if that is the way the County decided to go

President Kirby responded:

- Actually talked with a Board member from Novant Health last week about the county's current situation with the hospital; he seemed quite interested in the current situation

Commissioner Walker continued:

- What do you see that would be different between a private entity versus a county operated EMS?

President Kirby responded:

- We have a unique management style
- We are very cost containment
- Make sure we are providing the best service
- We look at every way to save dollars

Commissioner Walker continued:

- Confirmed with President Kirby that American TransMed uses a combination of Paramedics/EMTs and that there is currently a shortage of Paramedics across the states

President Kirby responded:

- To my knowledge, North and South Carolina does not have anything in stone that requires two paramedics
- We focus on providing a Paramedic and an EMT
- If I could put nurses on the units, I would
- Would like to have two paramedics, but have to look at costs
- Lot of private entities use the Paramedic/EMT combination
- Seeing a lot of counties starting to use that combination also
- That is a decision that the county would have to make

Commissioner Walker continued:

- Could you see American TransMed doing part of the service?

President Kirby responded:

- We are here today to offer our services as a resource for Stokes County
- Open to all options
- We would have to look at the data to determine what services we could offer

Commissioner Walker continued:

- Could possibly look at using American TransMed at first with a fewer amount of units
- County is in the early stages of looking into privatization
- What about our current employees?
- Speak about training

President Kirby responded:

- We would have to look at all data before committing to providing any services
- Would want to look at first responders within the county
- Would definitely look at the current employees
- Have a training officer to make all employees are up to date on training
- Have a medical director for both North and South Carolina
- Have a Quality Assurance Committee that reviews all calls daily

Commissioner Walker continued:

- Confirmed with President Kirby that American TransMed provides some services to Novant; currently do not have contract with Novant

President Kirby responded:

- Can give you references, but suggest the County do a RFP
- Always try to provide the best quality service
- Here today to answer any questions

County Manager Morris commented:

- Confirmed with President Kirby that he would be glad to provide hourly rates, but not publicly

- We pay different rates in different areas based on supply and demand

President Kirby responded:

- We pay competitive rates
- Appreciate the opportunity to talk further about providing services for Stokes County

Vice Chairman Booth commented:

- Confirmed with President Kirby that American TransMed offers basic benefits similar to most companies, do not offer a retirement plan, pay 60% of the employee's health insurance premium
- Confirmed with President Kirby that privatization could take place within 60-90 days
- Confirmed with President Kirby that American TransMed's goal would be that the quality of service does not change
- Confirmed with President Kirby that the preliminary cost of running a unit is \$250,000 (estimated)
- Confirmed with President Kirby that American TransMed would try to give back to the county regarding collections, but that would have to be worked out
- Confirmed with President Kirby that American TransMed tries to give back to the community
- Confirmed with President Kirby that American TransMed is third on the FEMA list to be called out

Commissioner Walker commented:

- If you were in the County's position, what would you consider would be important issues to consider?

President Kirby responded:

- Quality of care
- Continuous care
- Cost of care
- What is included in the cost of care
- Speaking to other counties who have gone with privatization
- All these should be included in the RFP
- We are here to help, even if the county decides to privatize or not

Chairman Inman expressed appreciation to Mr. Kirby and Mr. Moss for their information today.

County Manager Morris provided American TransMed with the survey that would be sharing with the Board of County Commissioners once it is completed.

Chairman Inman commented:

- Just want everyone to know that the reason for American TransMed being here today was for information about privatization
- It has nothing to do with the quality of care being provided by our current EMS System
- We have an excellent EMS System that provides high quality service
- It is the cost only that is being considered which is being driven by competitive salaries, supply and demand of paramedics, and cost of equipment

### **Budget Work Session**

Chairman Inman turned the budget work session over to County Manager Morris for continuation of budget highlights.

County Manager Morris presented and briefly discussed the following:

### **Department Budget Highlights – Common Expenditures Across all Departments**

- Personnel Services
  - Longevity increases
  - Increase in employer retirement contribution this year
  - Increase in medical insurance premium of 15%, no increase in dental
- Materials, Supplies & Expense
  - Fuel cost was funded at gallons used at a rate of \$2.50
  - Across the board reductions were not made since requests were based on actual use

**THESE ITEMS NOT REFLECTED ON INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENTAL CHARTS**

### **Department Budget Highlights - Administration**

- Budget increased by \$58,782 / 31.08%
- Salary / longevity increases
- Salary study \$45,000 (priced by the Piedmont Triad Regional Council- full study)

### **Department Budget Highlights – Animal Control**

- Budget increased \$54,205 / 25.07%
- Misc. Contractual Services increased due to veterinarian cost and update to software
  - Contract veterinarian spending significant amount of additional time to certify and train ACOs and oversee certain Animal Shelter operations such as drug accountability for DEA controlled drugs
- Increase cost for euthanasia drugs due to implementation of more humane process
- Increase cost to meet stricter guidelines being enforced by the State after last year's Animal Shelter closure

### **Department Budget Highlights – Arts Council**

- Budget increased \$12,326 / 13.19%

- Personnel cost is the only expense for Arts Council
- Arts Council Director's salary increase for one year per the Economic Development Committee recommendation
- Art Market upgrade is underway and scheduled for completion this calendar year (game changer for the Town of Danbury and Stokes County)

#### **County Budget Overview – Contingencies**

- Contingencies budget remained the same \$320,000
  - Emergency contingency funded at \$125,000
  - Leaves fuel cost contingency at \$45,000
    - May increase next year
  - \$100,000 for employee payoff of unused vacation, comp time and/or holiday leave
  - Personnel cost funded at \$50,000

#### **Department Budget Highlights - Cooperative Extension**

- Budget increased \$20,124 / 12.83%
- 50/50 match on salaries approved FY 2015-16
- Full time Livestock Agent hired and paid 50% by Stokes County
- Director retiring in October 2016

#### **County Budget Overview – Debt Service**

- Budget decreased \$104,619 / (1.95%)
- Refinancing of private placement loans in July or Aug
- Summary of Debt Service:
  - 1997-98 School debt – West Stokes High School/Piney Grove Middle School (1 year remaining)
  - 2009 financing for PODs for Nancy Reynolds School temporary location (7 years remaining)
  - 2009 financing for land for schools – Poplar Springs Elementary school (12 years remaining)
  - 2010 financing for Nancy Reynolds School and Early College / Community College (13 years remaining)
  - 2011 QSCB for Poplar Springs School and Southeastern Middle School (11 years remaining)
  - 2011 QZAB for Southeastern Middle School (11 years remaining)
  - 2013 financing for addition to Lawsonville Elementary (12 years remaining)
  - Financing for Satellite Forsyth Tech Community College for 1 year until approval of USDA Loan, if not approved, will do a private placement
  - Sheriff's Department cars and ambulance remounts payoff FY 2016-17
  - Sheriff's Department cars, Ambulance, Fire Marshal vehicle, Solid Waste Used Vehicle, and Garage Truck payoff FY 2018-19
  - New ambulance, truck Sheriff's Department, servers for various departments payoff FY 2017/18
  - Roof Government Center and EMS station payoff FY 2018/19

- Communication Equipment payoff FY 2017-18
- Autumn Square payoff FY 2022/23
- For FY 2016/17 financing 1 new ambulance, 4 defibrillators and 5 CPR coaching devices, 5 stretchers, 1 car for jail, 6 patrol cars, and front end alignment machine for garage

**Department Budget Highlights – District Resource Center**

- Budget decreased \$3,036 / (1.86%)
- Will continue to supervise State Misdemeanor Confinement Program in conjunction with the Sheriff
- DRC more than pays for itself with Pre-trial Release Program and community service support to the County
- Community service support to the county such as mowing

**Department Budget Highlights – Economic Development**

- Budget increased \$646,233 / 837.96%
- Advertising/Marketing increased to try new marketing strategies (using electronic with some printed materials) (new application is working very well)
- Moved a lot of things in-house (more control and less cost))
- Reclassify Administrative Assistant to Economic Development Tech Analyst per the Economic Development Committee recommendation effective 09-10-2016
- \$1,800,000 appropriation for Riverstreet Networks, \$600,000 per year for 3 years paid in July each year beginning July 2016

**Department Budget Highlights - Elections**

- Budget decreased \$37,706 / (16.40%)
- Decrease due to election cycles
- Election Board requested a 2-step salary increase for the Director and Assistant Director effective 09-10-2016

**Department Budget Highlights – Emergency Communications**

- Budget increased \$85,349 / 12.19%
- Continuing to work on back-up system with Rockingham County; multiple funding sources being analyzed to fund the back-up plan (plan has to be completed by July)
  - Significant amount of the plan will be funded from E911
- Generator for Sauratown Mountain (County’s equipment) paid from capital reserve

**Department Budget Highlights – Emergency Management**

- Budget decreased \$49,137 / (31.99%)
- Did not appropriate funds for the docking station at Poplar Springs Elementary School for emergency shelter (should be considered when funding is available)
- Completed the docking station at London Elementary for emergency shelter in FY 2015-16

**Department Budget Highlights – Emergency Medical Services**

- Budget increased \$1,078,437/ 40.11%

- Purchase of one new ambulance (financed)
- Some of the purchases are to bring the backup ambulances up to date with required equipment
  - If equipment not purchased, may need to purchase on short notice if inspected by the State
- Purchase of 4 LifePak monitor/defibrillators and 5 TruCPR Coaching Devices
- Purchase 10 Engel Coolers for medication, saves on cost of medications – keeps from throwing away medicine that expires
- Purchase 5 Ferno Stretchers (financed) risk reduction
  - Hopefully save on worker compensation claims
- Purchase AirTraq Camera Adapters (9) risk reduction
- Purchase 2 computers
- Changing work schedule from 24/48 to 24/72 hour pay period effective 08-13-16
  - 10 paramedics
  - 1 supervisor
  - This is adding another shift
  - Reduce overtime hours per work schedule
- Recommended an internal study of all aspects of EMS
  - Could do a RFP or an RFI (request for information) in order to get some feedback about privatization if so desired by the Board

**Department Budget Highlights – Environmental Health**

- Budget increased \$24,913 / 9.21%
- Increased well testing requested resulting in increased cost of well testing supplies
- CDP Food Inspection Program software-funded with fees, food and lodging revenues and Capital Reserve Fund (would help with efficiency) risk reduction
- Recommend EH Section be placed under operational control of County Manager for operational issues only
  - Most of the Environmental Health issues come directly to the manager; they bypass health director (receive calls from commissioners and citizens)
  - Environmental Health located in the Administrative Building and works closely with Planning
  - Most issues are elevated by the time the issue gets to me
  - Strictly operational – no personnel
  - Mission would be to get inspections done
  - Supervisor has no issues with the recommendation

Chairman Inman commented:

- Recent change approved by this Board involving the engagement of a backhole digger when the permit is issued is working extremely well
- When using the new permit process with the backhole digger, the applicant will get an answer that day
- As a realtor, appreciate the Board approving this new permit process

Commissioner Walker commented:

- My preference is the number of directives that the manager has should be going down and not going up

County Manager Morris responded:

- Conceptually, I agree, but in this case, the issue coming to me is going to happen by default

Commissioner Walker continued:

- Looks like we are passing the Health Director that could be making those decisions and may be closer to the issue since Environmental Health falls under the Health Department
- Having a little bit of a challenge putting the pieces together

County Manager Morris responded:

- Theoretically, that is correct, but the calls come straight to the manager
- If I give to Scott, they come back to me
- I am not saying that Scott is doing anything wrong
- The citizens don't like to hear Scott's answer which normally is the same answer that I provide
- This way, I can deal with the issue first hand
- Saves time for both Scott and Wanda
- Can always go to Scott for his expertise
- Would not cut Scott out of the loop

Chairman Inman commented:

- The location of Environmental Health works great
- They work with the Planning Department on a daily basis

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Very protective when it comes to the manager's time
- See this as something a manager would normally not get involved with

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Would appreciate further discussion at a later date

County Manager Morris commented:

- If the Board chooses not to go with the recommendation, it is no problem
- Trying to be more responsive
- Save time

#### **Department Budget Highlights - Finance**

- Budget increased \$29,401/ 7.55%
- Increase investment revenues due to rate increase by Federal Government
- Upgrade to AD timecard system to cloud instead of purchase of a server (trend to move to cloud)

### **Department Budget Highlights – Fire Marshal**

- Budget decreased \$38,333/ (14.24%)
- Purchase one computer
- Purchase one Scott Air Pack

### **Department Budget Highlights – Forsyth Tech**

- Budget increased \$102,820/ 97.58%
- No General Fund dollars
- Reclassify Custodian/Security Technician to Lead Custodian/Security Technician effective 10-8-16
- Adds 2 Custodian/Security/Technicians effective 10-08-16 for the new community college (will be running two shifts)
- Increase percentage of salary and fringes for Water & Sewer Maintenance Technicians (provides more time for water & sewer functions)
  - Need to get the radium out of the water in the upcoming year
  - Need to stay on top of water issues
- Adds Front Entrance Security Gate with opening of new building

The Board discussed adding two new positions (custodian/security) for the community college.

Vice Chairman Booth commented:

- Do not understand why two positions are needed since there is already one custodian/security employee
- Believe two shifts could adequately supply the need

County Manager Morris noted that he would have Director Delehant provide the Board with more detailed information.

County Manager Morris noted that there have been several facilities added to Public Buildings with no added staff which does not allow staff to do preventive maintenance, only reactionary.

Vice Chairman Booth commented:

- Confirmed with Manager Morris that Public Buildings' budget also has another new position

County Manager Morris added that we are just trying to adjust staff to the amount of work that has to be done, more facilities, more work.

### **Department Budget Highlights – GIS/Mapping**

- Budget increased \$6,434 / 3.36%

### **Department Budget Highlights – Governing Body**

- Budget increased \$1,086 / 0.11%
- Additional Board of E&R meetings due to Revaluation

### **Department Budget Highlights – Health Department**

- Budget increased \$27,412 / 3.56%
- Physician Extender II hiring rate increased in FY 2015-16
- Processing Assistant III employee retired and the NC Community Care Network will not be funding this position; therefore, the position was removed and the revenue eliminated
- Health Department total General Fund contribution is, Health Department \$369,831; Environmental Health \$218,069 and Title IXI Medicaid Fund \$574,561 totaling \$1,162,461 – an increase of \$7,922/.69%

### **Department Budget Highlights – Health, Title XIX Medicaid Fund**

- Budget decrease \$19,796 / (-1.57%)
- New unfunded mandate –County is required to pay part of the cost settlement of the accountant's salary
- General fund appropriation reduced \$44,926/ (7.25%)

### **Department Budget Highlights – Information Systems**

- Budget increased \$10,352 / 4.61%
- Purchase server switch replacements, 2 per year
- Purchase one computer

Commissioner Walker confirmed with County Manager Morris that IT verifies the need for computers in every department each year.

### **Department Budget Highlights – Jail**

- Budget increased \$148,730 / 9.23%
- Increase on Misc. Contractual Services – Health Services due to request for a nurse for 12 hours a day 7 days a week as risk reduction measure
- Replacement of two-way radios (safety issue)
- Purchase transport vehicle (finance)
- Purchase washing machine (commercial unit)
- Adds one new jailer position effective 09-10-2016

Commissioner Walker noted he had been told of different radios on the market that could be used instead of having to solely use one specific radio which was very expensive during the initial phase of the upgrade.

County Manager Morris noted that was also his understanding too.

### **Department Budget Highlights – Legal**

- Budget increased \$20,000 / 25.00%

- Contract price same for County Attorney \$72,000
- Also includes \$28,000 for potential litigation outside legal counsel when required
  - Could have litigation before this fiscal year ends

Vice Chairman Booth confirmed with Manager Morris that legal for DSS is located in the DSS Budget.

**Department Budget Highlights – Library**

- Budget increased \$5,641 / 1.15%
- No funding for COLA
- \$3,171 for 5% increase in health insurance
- \$1,780 for E-rate revenue telephone reduction of 20%
- \$3,000 for E-Books (\$1,000 per library)
- (\$2,490) decrease in combination other line items

The Board discussed the Libraries only having a 5% increase in health insurance premiums.

Manager Morris noted that the 5% was an estimate, did not have actual quotes at the time of budget submission.

Vice Chairman Booth confirmed with Manager Morris that every department has an increase such as insurance, retirement, longevity, etc.

County Manager Morris turned the work session over to Finance Director Edwards.

Finance Director Edwards noted:

- If all personnel and equipment was taken from the Manager’s recommended budget, the increase would .90% over last year’s budget
- If you include the EMS work shift schedule change, it would be a 1.90% increase over last year’s budget
- Total amount of General Fund for EMS is \$1,411,986 with this year’s recommended budget (includes the shift change)
- Total amount of General Fund for EMS would be approximately \$961,000 for this year without the shift change
- Fund Balance appropriation for FY 2013-14 = \$2,845,237 (did not use because County received half of the Hold Harmless)
- Fund Balance appropriation for FY 2014-15 = \$2,823,913 (used \$113,329)
- Fund Balance appropriation for FY 2015-16 = \$2,244,446 (feel most of the appropriation will be used this fiscal year)

**Department Budget Highlights – Medical Examiner**

- Budget increase \$12,000/ 48.00%

- Pays for autopsies and death pronouncements
- State increased medical examiner fees and autopsy fees
- Supplies and training added to budget, but funded by revenue from DHHS

County Manager Morris noted another state mandate with the increase in the medical examiner fees.

**Department Budget Highlights – Mental Health**

- CenterPoint funding remains the same

Commissioner Walker noted that he was very protective of the Opportunity Center and would not want any changes done during the transition.

Chairman Inman commented:

- Have had assurance that the funding for the Opportunity Center will not change

**Department Budget Highlights – Natural Resources**

- Budget increased \$7,481 / 2.35%
- Purchase 1 computer
- District Watershed Coordinator funded for one year to manage and close out grants

**Department Budget Highlights – Parks**

- Budget decreased \$7,651 / (25.00%)
- Suspension of grant program for county park improvements for one year to let a couple of the parks catch up on their projects
- Continues \$2,000 operating costs for four (4) county parks

The Board discussed the \$2,000 operating costs.

County Manager Morris noted the concept of the \$2,000 for operating costs is to help the parks whose volunteers are declining to maintain the parks and not eventually be turned back over to the county for operation.

Vice Chairman Booth requested information about the program where inmates would be used for maintenance around the county campus.

Manager Morris noted that he would look into that for the next meeting.

**Department Budget Highlights – Planning**

- Budget increased \$12,107 / 3.016%
  - Director also serving as Interim Economic Development Director until June 2017
- Chairman Inman noted the next Budget Session would be Wednesday at 2:00 pm.

Chairman Inman opened the floor for any discussion before adjournment.

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Would like a copy of every fire department's budget and audit before the next meeting
- Number of EMS calls for each unit and total amount collected from January 1, 2016 to date

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Was questioned by a citizen several days ago, "why did the county not buy the same kind of fire truck each year in groups to save costs?"

County Manager Rick Morris commented:

- Each fire department is a separate corporation with a separate Board of Directors that decides what that department needs

Commissioner Walker continued:

- Then why do we not buy a standard fire truck that can meet everyone's needs

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- I can agree on buying a standard fire truck

Vice Chairman Booth noted that the Fire Commission does have a \$400,000 limit per fire truck.

Chairman Inman commented:

- Feel the Fire Commission has put a stop to spending with limiting fire truck purchases each year
- Feel they are doing a great job to utilize the funding from the Fire Tax
- Not every fire department needs the same kind of fire truck

Vice Chairman Booth commented:

- Noted the low amount in the Fire Tax Fund Balance

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Inman entertained a motion to adjourn the Budget Work Session.

Vice Chairman Booth moved to adjourn the Budget Work Session. Commissioner Jones seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

---

**Darlene M. Bullins**  
**Clerk to the Board**

---

**J. Leon Inman**  
**Chairman**